

TOLEDO - POZNAN



ALLIANCE

Alliance News

Toledo-Poznan Alliance quarterly newsletter — Spring 2007

General TPA Membership Meeting

The next general meeting for all membership will be on Sunday March 18, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. at the Sanger Branch Library on Central Ave. Contact David Chelminski at 517-264-1115 (h) or 419-530-4480 (w), if you would like to serve on the Board. We need some new ideas and new members. See enclosed flyer.

Zapusty i Sroda Popielcowa

In Poland, the last Thursday before Lent is known as Fat Thursday (Tlusty Czwartek). Huge quantities of paczki pastries are eaten until Ash Wednesday. This is also carnival time, Zapusty, similar to our Mardi Gras, with dancing and parties especially the final three days which are called *Ostatki*. Poles see this as a break from the dreariness of winter and work. Young crowds go to the disco and pubs. Older Poles celebrate with home parties. The celebration ends when the Lenten fast begins on Ash Wednesday (Sroda Popielcowa).

Polish Americans celebrate paczki day on Shrove Tuesday where the pastry is available here all over Toledo. You have your choice of many delicious fillings. Many Toledoans join in this tasty treat. Prune is the most popular filling in Poland.

On Ash Wednesday in Poland, willows are cut and placed in water. It is a good and holy sign when green sprouts appear by Sunday. These Polish palms will then be taken to church on Palm Sunday to be blessed.

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**Polish sayings:**

“When life gets unbearable, there is always Zakopane.”

“We, too, will one day be efficient. But we have to fire all our planners first.”

## The Toledo Polish Genealogy Society

The Toledo Polish Genealogy Society was established in 2002, by a small group of interested genealogists. They now number over 50 members. Originally meetings were held at the Locke Branch Library in East Toledo, then moved to the Main Library in downtown Toledo. After increasing their membership, it was necessary to move again, this time to the Lagrange Street Library on the corner of Lagrange and Manhattan. Meetings are held on the 3rd Saturday of every month, except for July & August when no meetings are held. Meeting time is 10:00 a.m. Dues are \$15 per calendar year. Check out their website at: [www.geocities.com/tpgs02](http://www.geocities.com/tpgs02)

## Flower Giving in Poland

Polish women may well receive more flowers than anywhere else in the world. Flower shops are found on almost every street. Selections are impressive. They make the perfect gift for a name day, or birthday, for men or women. If taken to someone's home, they should always be presented to the lady of the house.

Flowers for social occasions should always be bought in odd numbers. Even numbers are reserved for funerals. Red roses and chrysanthemums are traditionally bought for funerals or visiting the cemetery.

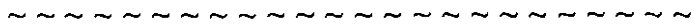
## Tour to Poland

Tour to Poland is being planned next July, 2007. If you are interested in traveling in small groups contact Kathy Gabel, 419-385-8516 for more information.

**MORE READING MATERIAL ON  
POLAND AND RELATED TOPICS  
AVAILABLE THROUGH TPA**

Pani Lonia (Mrs. Lucy Szafarowicz, one of our founding Board members) recently cleared about two dozen Polish and English books and magazines from her personal collection. Besides a Holy Bible turned over directly to Father Marek Ciesla, pastor of Toledo's now-twinning Polish parishes of St. Hedwig's and St. Adalbert's, and a copy of local author Rosemary A. Chorzempa's *POLISH ROOTS* donated to the Toledo Polish Genealogy Society, she graciously agreed to allow some of the items to be held back from the remaining materials turned over to the Toledo Public Library (which will hopefully put the Polish titles on display at the "Polish corner" at its Lagrange-Manhattan branch) for the Toledo- Poznan Alliance Inc. to make available to members (for a voluntary donation) at future events. Look for these Polish-related materials (and help support our Polish sister-City Poznan's Dom Dziecka orphanage while enjoying or sharing our rich heritage) at our annual general membership meeting, along with previously-unseen books donated by former Board member Don Samull and others, at Sanger branch library on Sunday March 18th!

David Chelminski



***New Book by James Conroyd Martin***

With Napoleon Bonaparte's ill-fated campaign to conquer Russia as a backdrop, *Against a Crimson Sky* manages to turn the wily emperor's exploitation of Polish patriotism into a classic read that lovers of *Push Not the River* will devour. Martin brings back the characters that made his first novel so compelling, deftly weaving their daily lives into the panorama of war and turmoil that consumed Poland in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. He portrays a world of hardship and heart in marvelously rendered 'little pieces of happiness stolen from a tapestry of turmoil, war, and separation.'

Leonard Kniffel, editor-in-chief of *American Libraries* and author of *A Polish Son in the Motherland*

*Against a Crimson Sky* is available at local bookstores and the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library.

Walter Palicki

***Pat's Corner...***

Two of our members have received recognition. In the Toledo Magazine section of the Blade a month or so ago was an article on JoeAnn Cousino and her classes both out of her home and at the Toledo Museum of Art. JoeAnn has been teaching since the early 40's and some of her bronzes have won national acclaim.

The YWCA has nominated Peggy Grant for the Milestone Award representing the arts. There will be a luncheon on March 29 at the Seagate Center where all the nominees will be honored.

Friday, January 26 there was a Polish Mass, Polish Dinner, and a "Polish Catholics in Toledo" presentation at Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Cathedral. The 4th Degree Knights of Columbus-Bishop Hoffman Assembly #807 sponsored this event. This was a wonderful way for us to gather and participate in our heritage. Rev. Marek Ciesla and Rev. Paul Kwiatkowski and others celebrated Mass. After a delicious Polish Dinner a presentation was given by Fr. Paul of the history of the Polish Catholics in Toledo. It was an extremely interesting and entertaining presentation that we all enjoyed.



***Cleveland Poles Welcome Grant***

Peggy Grant traveled to Cleveland on Jan 3rd-4th at the invitation of the Cleveland Society of Poles and the Polish-American Culture Center. She gave two talks about her husband Adam Grant, his life and his award-winning artistic talent for painting.

They enjoyed the talk and welcomed some contact with our organization with a possible partnering on some future cultural event. Peggy said they were a wonderful and well-organized group. Hope something will come of this connection.

Walter Palicki

## Polish Leading Ladies

The first female Euro-Hollywood crossover star that paved the way for screen actresses such as Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich was a fascinating Polish beauty by the name of Pola Negri, who incidentally has a star on Hollywood Boulevard. It is said often by cinema aficionados that she was born in Poland, "made" in Germany, and stolen by Hollywood. She made her debut in pre-WWI Warsaw and soon found herself working with German directors. She arrived in Hollywood in 1923 taking America by storm.

Pola was born Apolonia Chalupiec on January 3rd, 1897 in Janowo, Poland (Russian partition). For PR purposes she claimed to be born on "the last day of the century," that is, December 31, 1899. She died in San Antonio Texas in 1987 after contracting pneumonia.

Owing to her very feminine mystique, speaking five languages and with her passionate characters and her exotic good looks, Negri was linked romantically with the likes of Charlie Chaplin and Rudolph Valentino. A "vamp" by reputation, a tragedienne in practice, in truth she was a stunningly gifted actress. Besides trysts with Rod LaRoque and the aforementioned, she was wife to a count and a prince.

Often there was Hollywood gossip regarding Pola and Polish-American actress, Gloria Swanson. Actually they were friends. Occasionally the one would invite the other to a dinner party at the other's house, which was customary at the time. If they did start avoiding each other (which apparently they did later on), it was to avoid further provoking the fabricated publicity that was flying about concerning their so-called "rivalry". This ongoing bit of publicity stemmed from the fact that big-name drama queen Pola had just moved from Europe onto the Paramount lot, where Gloria was already the reigning dramatic star. The plot thickened, and the two stars were along for the ride whether they liked it or not.

Recently the New York Museum of Modern Art hosted a film retrospective of this great actress who earned as much as \$10,000 a week making silent films and rising to be one of Americas biggest silent film stars ever.

The retrospective opened with the premiere of Mariusz Kotowski's documentary *Life Is a Dream in Cinema: Pola Negri*. It is a chronicle of the star's life, with clips from rare films and interviews with friends, co-workers, and critics.

Preceding Pola to America by 40 plus years was stage actress extraordinaire Helena Modjeska (Modrzejewska). While at a swank Manhattan gathering, a request was made to perform a soliloquy of her choosing. She brought the room of English speaking American blue-bloods to tears by simply reciting the Polish alphabet in a most dramatic fashion.

And now, be on the lookout for 23-year-old Polish actress Alicja Bachleda. This young emerging actress was the major standout at this year's Sundance Film Festival in a film titled *Trade* also starring Kevin Kline. She is also a singer and her first music album is due to be released in Europe within weeks.



Pola Negri



Alicja Bachleda



Helena Modjeska

Denny Kutylowski, Freelance writer